Reviewing the Past –

Planning the Future

Guideline for Performance Appraisals

Updated August 2013
Overview

Wright State University is committed to transforming the lives of the community we serve. We believe in innovation, inclusion and the development of our entrepreneurial spirit. As one of the largest employers in the region, we acknowledge that a vital part of our mission is “empowering our students, faculty, staff and alumni to develop professionally and personally.”

To achieve this shared outlook, we need a community of high performing individuals and teams to go beyond what is simply required to achieve extraordinary results. We also need to cultivate a culture of service and a commitment to a workplace that is trusting, inclusive, creative, and respectful.

We know that our employees want to be successful contributors to the important work of our University. They want to know what is expected of them, how they can most effectively meet those expectations, and how they can continue to learn and grow. The performance planning and review process is a powerful tool to help employees understand the importance of their contributions and to better align their own work with unit and University goals.

Wright State University’s performance planning and review process is designed to take a snapshot of an employee’s performance during a specific timeframe as well as provide an opportunity for the employee and supervisor to establish performance and professional goals for the future. The focused attention and commitment to ongoing dialogue by both supervisors and employees will:

- Align every employee’s work with Wright State University’s strategic plan
- Establish expected behaviors to meet strategic plan goals
- Assess individual progress toward attaining University objectives for the current review period
- Recognize every employee’s contributions
- Increase role clarity and enhance communication regarding future expectations

The Performance Appraisal form includes elements that further an open, honest communication between employees and their supervisors about the employees’ strengths and areas for improvement as well as employee initiated development opportunities. It also features elements to encourage specific goals to be cooperatively set for the upcoming evaluation period.

Providing our employees with feedback and direction is essential to the growth and development of Wright State University. All employees should be acquainted with the WSU Strategic Plan and understand how their role supports and contributes to the University’s Mission, Vision, Values and Goals.

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General Information

Performance Management is an ongoing process of communication between a supervisor and an employee, focused on performance measurement and behavior, based on agreed-upon expectations. The performance management process includes semi-formal and formal discussions throughout a set period. The performance management process typically culminates in a supervisor completing a formal Performance Appraisal for a particular period.

The annual Performance Appraisal is the most important segment in the performance management process, representing both an end and a beginning of the ongoing performance management process. The Performance Appraisal should concentrate on a list of core competencies (with specific focal points) in conjunction with the completion of previously agreed-upon expectations. The formal Performance Appraisal is an opportunity to review, get input and provide feedback as well as a chance to look forward and set new expectations.

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Each staff member should be given the opportunity to communicate their input on each core competency as well as all proposed new expectations, either prior to or during the discussion phase of the formal Performance Appraisal (when the Performance Appraisal form is still a modifiable document). Input from the staff member being evaluated should be taken into account before completing and signing the final Performance Appraisal form that will be submitted to Human Resources.

Where to Obtain Copies of Forms

Wright State University’s performance appraisal tools are reviewed and updated on an annual basis. Please use only the current self-appraisal and annual appraisal forms on the Human Resources website.

Meeting Specific Needs of a College or Division

This tool can be used as a stand-alone or it can be supplemented with other departmental tools to strengthen its relevance for a specific college or division. It is understood that some areas may currently use customized assessment tools to evaluate their employees. Use of other performance tools is acceptable for informal meetings and coaching opportunities. However, to ensure that all employees are evaluated using the same set of metrics, only the performance review tool maintained by Human Resources will be accepted as official documentation for formal annual performance appraisals at Wright State University.

Note that Human Resources will be happy to review supplemental assessment tools to ensure compliance with WSU Policies and any local, state or federal regulations.

What Should Supervisors Expect?

All supervisors must understand that performance management is an ongoing, continual process. It must contain frequent, regularly scheduled communication between the employee and supervisor. Supervisors should ask open questions, listen actively, provide constructive feedback and set expectations and professional development needs.

A performance management ‘year’ should contain several significant discussions, both formal and informal. These should occur at least quarterly meetings to gauge progress toward agreed
upon goals. All information collected can then be used to ease the annual performance appraisal process.

Specifically, first-level supervisors should

- Help employees align their individual goals with departmental goals and University goals
- Provide feedback throughout year and conduct a Mid-year Progress Check-in
- Review draft evaluation with second-level supervisor BEFORE meeting with employee to discuss the evaluation

Second-level supervisors should

- Meet with first-level supervisors to complete the review process
- Validate legitimacy of ratings
- Support ratings/decisions
- Discuss unusual circumstances requiring recognition or corrective action

What Should Employees Expect?

Every employee should expect to:

- Submit a self-appraisal
- Receive a formal review at end of the performance planning period and plan their performance for the upcoming review period
- Have regular communication with their supervisor to review progress and make adjustments, as necessary
- Sign their review form
- Receive a copy of the completed review after supervisors sign
- Have the right to make an appeal
  - **In Person Appeal(s):**
    If an employee still has concerns which he or she feels have not been resolved after meeting with the immediate supervisor, the individual may request an appointment with the next level manager up to and including the vice president of the respective area.
  - **Written Appeal(s):**
    In the event the employee continues to have a difference in opinion after meeting with appropriate management in his or her reporting structure, the employee has the option of following up with written comments which will become part of the employee’s permanent file maintained in Human Resources.

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Performance Rating Guidelines

Employees want to know how they will be evaluated and what it takes to reach the highest rating. When assigning ratings, supervisors should be sensitive to how entry-level employees are rated versus experienced employees. For example, an entry-level employee may still ‘meet expectations’ even when the supervisor has provided considerable monitoring of work at times.

There are three rating categories: Exceeds Expectations (Role Model), Meets Expectations (Demonstrating), and Does Not Meet Expectations (Development Needed). To aid in consistent application of these terms, please consider the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exceeds Expectations (Role Model)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Performance Rating Definition</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>This category is reserved for employees who provide an exceptional level of performance or service and who regularly and substantially exceed overall expectations. Outstanding performers work with little or no supervision and generate output that is exceptionally high in quality, quantity, and timeliness. The individual assumes a very high level of responsibility for his or her own performance. The employee generates and leads new programs or services that are innovative and creative, and is a role model for other employees. Accomplishments have significant impact on the University’s mission and goals. Individuals are often recognized as the “go to” person. The outcomes of those employees who exceed expectations are of such quality that they will consistently occur among only a small number of individuals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Examples</strong></td>
</tr>
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| • Routinely volunteers for extra work/responsibility while maintaining strong job performance
• Consistently exceeds quotas or production standards
• Often suggests new policies, procedures, techniques as a need emerges rather than waiting until the need is overwhelming
• Effectively juggles multiple priorities, tasks, and/or user requests
• Helps facilitate change in a positive manner
• Readily assumes responsibility
• Communicates clearly; fosters communication in every direction by actively engaging in the exchange of information and encouraging this activity in supervised staff
• Recognized for exceptional expertise and leadership |

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# Meets Expectations (Demonstrates)

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| Employees rated at this level regularly meet and occasionally exceed expectations. The employee does not perform ‘does not meet expectations’ on any major responsibility. A rating at this level indicates that the employee is a competent, productive, and valued member of the team. A fully successful employee consistently meets expectations within specified time and cost limits, understands and supports departmental and University goals and initiatives. The employee requires little to no supervision to complete tasks. Individuals also contribute to innovative and creative approaches to meeting and furthering departmental goals and initiatives. Meeting expectations is a good rating that reflects an employee is consistently doing what is expected. | • Produces quality work to meet and occasionally exceed work expectations  
• Applies logic and reason successfully when making decisions; makes infrequent errors due to oversight and/or misunderstanding  
• Applies appropriate judgment in responding to and referring questions or resolving problems  
• Willingly implements new techniques, considering the concerns and suggestions of others  
• Continuously tries to improve work performance  
• Maintains up-to-date knowledge of relevant procedures and functions |

# Does Not Meet Expectations (Development Needed)

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| Employees at this level fail to meet one or more major responsibilities. The employee may also show either unwillingness or an inability to improve.  
When performance is at this level, a performance improvement plan should be implemented identifying specific actions needed to improve performance.  
It is expected that the supervisor will have counseled the employee, before the annual performance review, on issues that led to this overall rating.  
Employees in this category should not receive merit-based increases in pay. | • Performs in an unreliable or inconsistent manner when completing work; fails to complete tasks without frequent reminders; often exceeds the expected time frame to complete assigned tasks  
• Often looks for reason why assignments cannot be accomplished rather than figuring out how to complete work  
• Fails to anticipate or respond effectively to crises, obstacles, and/or changes in program direction  
• Requires considerable to substantial supervisory monitoring, consultation, and modification to implement goals and priorities in a timely and/or effective manner  
• Often fails to recognize and identify routine problems |
Who to Contact with Questions

- For general questions or to obtain copies of previous performance review forms, contact Human Resources
- For assistance addressing new or existing employee performance issues contact Employee and Labor Relations

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